rehabilitation and resettlement of people who are affected because of the project activities.

Air and noise pollution in capital

370. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CPCB has recently revealed that air and noise pollution in the capital has increased;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any assessment of increase/decrease of air and noise pollution in other major cities have also been undertaken by CPCB;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the effective steps taken by Government to check such increase of air and noise pollution in major cities, particularly in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) to (d) Central Pollution Control Board, in coordination with State Pollution Control Boards, is carrying out assessment of air and noise pollution in the country, including major cities like Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai and capital city of Delhi. The available air quality data indicates that in most of the metropolitan cities, the Respirable Suspended Particulate Matter (RSPM) levels have crossed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), whereas the annual average of Sulpur dioxide (SO_2) and Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) remained well within the NAAQS limits except occasional violations. The noise pollution levels were observed on a higher side during the festival period due to bursting of firecrackers and use of loudspeakers.

(e) Government has taken several steps for prevention and control of air and noise pollution in metro and mega cities of the country. These include:

— Emission standards for various industries have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

— Promotion of cleaner technologies for control of industrial pollution.

— Control of vehicular pollution through promotion of clean fuels, introduction of stringent emission norms and fuel specifications.

— Control of noise pollution through various notifications such as for diesel gensets, firecrackers and motor vehicles.

— City specific plans for improvement of environment.

— Strengthening the monitoring network and institutional capabilities to facilitate and improve enforcement mechanism.

Food consignment from US

371. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT :
SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee of the Ministry, in December 2002, rejected US consignment of 1000 tonnes of Soya-Corn blend meant for making food for poor school children in India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore;

(c) what is Government's policy to ensure all health checks for such imports;

(d) whether US has appealed to authority against the rejection; and

(e) if so, what has been the decision of the appellate authority?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV): (a) and (b) The proposal of CARE & CRS to import Corn Soya Blend (CSB) containing genetically modified (GM) material under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program through United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was considered by the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC) in its meeting held on 7th November 2002. The GEAC noted that there are several GM corn varieties being cultivated in USA both for human consumption and animal feed. In view of the apprehension expressed by ICMR and in the absence of any certification